

War & Women: from the perspective of Krishna's beloved Radha

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Abstract

War poems document both the cruellest and darkest periods in human history and the brightest moments also. Kanupriya is the one the greatest creation of Hindi Literature where narrator see the aftermath of war through Radha's perspective. The poet's intense yearning to declare the futility of this world of mossy, tainted, and petty self-interested men, who prioritize war over peace, valorise impurity over love, reveals the radiance of Kanupriya's personality. Her unwavering love for Kanu(Krishna) empowers her with wisdom and enriches her with the experience of self-satisfaction while serving others. She introspects, reasons, analyses the pains of separation and discusses her rights with Kanu. Her struggles have not only enhanced the brighter aspects of her personality, but Kanu's fearless closeness and profound compassion have also transformed her into a self-conscious woman, constantly grappling with dilemmas, speculations, imaginations, questions, self-determinations. Kanupriya's monologue, ravings, conversations and introspection from time to time not only provide insight into interpreting emotions in a complex and multi-layered context but also alleviate the darkness and disorders within her and Kanu. The questions, Radha asks Krishna, put humanity's history, society, culture, and politics on trial. This vigilant, self-aware woman cannot tolerate the sacrifice of her best self for Kanu's greatness. She cannot justify the importance of prioritizing war, ignoring the deep devotion of her unconditional love for seemingly meaningless concepts like purpose, dharma, karma, justice, punishment, sin, and virtue. Through Kanupriya, Bharti touches new level of human sensitivity that heals the wounds of trauma-riddled humans by imparting the fluidity of empathy and compassion. This literary creation concludes with the optimistic view that Krishna, who went to the battlefield, will prove the futility of war and, exhausted, return to the same playground where Radha has been anxiously awaiting him for ages. This world is suffering from political, social, and cultural disintegration. In this valueless, disintegrating state, Kanupriya's core message can make a valuable contribution

I. INTRODUCTION

It was a pleasant coincidence that during these days, almost simultaneously and for different reasons, I had the opportunity to read three books: Alberto Moravia's 'Two Women,' Garima Srivastava's 'Deh Hi Desh,' and 'Kanupriya,' which lingers in memory for this article. A curious coincidence is that the tone, narrative, and treatment of all three books are companions on almost the same path. All three depict the consequences and impact of war with the lens of women's eyes. The widely read and studied Bharati Ji's perspective of thought and creative power is universal due to its originality and sublime poetic consciousness. His poetry is a vivid document of cultural awareness, in which the grandeur of culture, spiritual divinity, and the expansiveness of Shiva merge with the intimate love of a woman, the fiery pain of separation, and the sparks of inner struggle that keep life and society in motion.

Bharti sees that the self-proclaimed grandiose edifices of Indian culture and tradition have conspired to transform the luminosity of women's identity and freedom into darkness. Under the guise of cultural dignity, he delves deep into the female psyche to capture the inner conflict, anguish, restlessness, and emotionality of women's lives. While a meaningful vision of life, a commitment to the interests of the people and society, a profound sensitivity toward women, and a passion to grapple with socio-political and historical inequalities reveal the strengths of her poetic dramas, the harmonious blend of emotion and language also proves fully capable of exposing the complexities of the times. Bharti Ji's poetry deeply engages these dimensions, captivates the mind, and, through the interest of women's self-respect, inspires a resolve to support the people.

II. DISCUSSION

War poems document both the cruellest and darkest periods in human history and the brightest moments also. The earliest war poem in Western history, "Endhadanna," is believed to have been composed by a Sumerian priest around 2300 BC, who spoke out against war:

"You are running down a mountain,

a soul of blood, hatred, greed, and anger,
dominating heaven and earth."

Nearly a millennium later, the Greek poet Homer captured the destructive and devastating ravages of war in his classic work, 'The Iliad'. The primary purpose of "Kanupriya" is to convey this sentiment. In 'Kanupriya', Bharati explores the problems of contemporary society and modern life, using a modern sensibility to make the infinite love of Radha and Krishna the central theme of his narrative. Rich in spiritual experience, inner conflict, and expressions of love, this work systematically develops Radha's character and her state of mind. "Purvaraga" and "Manjari Parinay" are the first stages of that development, "Sankalp Srishti" the second stage, and "Itihas" the third stage, where Krishna witnesses the process of history-making through Kanupriya. The way Bharati develops Radha's character in the third section is the greatest achievement of this work.

Infinite affection and intense love for Krishna are at the core character of Kanupriya. Many feminist critics have numerous complaints about Krishna in the context of Radha; therefore, it would be appropriate to discuss 'Radha' briefly. The comments of storyteller-thinker Anuradha and Manisha Ji regarding Krishna and Radha in some extent seem unnecessary. In the article, **The Process of Objectification of Women and the Evolution of Radha** Anuradha comments: "Is this the Krishna devotion that, according to Acharya Shukla, has been created to revive the withered minds of the people? Shukla ji saw a celebration of life in Surdas's poetry. The boy Krishna puts his hand on the young Radha's nipples, and the girl is powerless to stop him! What can patriarchal luxury or feudal indiscipline say about the celebration of life?"¹ Even if we leave aside the companionship and deep love between Krishna and Radha, because viewing love through the lens of any particular ideology will only lead to distortion, Prabhakar Shrotriya's comment in this context is noteworthy: "In the absence of introspection, a portion of religious (bhakti) poetry undoubtedly showed a hedonistic path to the poets of the Riti era. ...The Bhakti era was, to some extent, providing the framework for the Riti era."² Two phrases in this comment are noteworthy: "to a

certain extent" and "to some extent." Medieval poets, who composed poetry about the love of Krishna and Radha for their own pleasure, were also human beings, driven by sex, fear, and ego. Therefore, it was natural for a portion of devotional poetry to become so. Manisha comments, "Sita endured great hardships for Ram, giving up royal luxuries, but ultimately, she had to suffer the consequences of being a woman. Ram banished her from his home, and that too due to a mere stigma. Radha's love, on the other hand, is tremendous, boundless, and infinite. She is madly in love with Krishna, but the husband of 16,000 queens is engrossed in play. Radha was never married to him, and therefore, Radha was not given the status of a goddess. Perhaps it is the greatness of Hinduism (or perhaps there was some oversight here) that Radha is present with Krishna in temples. By being in the temple, she becomes revered; otherwise, alone, helpless, she would remain tearfully tormented in the fire of love."³ Dr. Abha Thakur answers this objection to some extent in her article, **'Women's Questions of Unconditional Love: Kanupriya'** writing, "While agreeing with most of Manisha's points, it is impossible to agree that Radha is given the status of a goddess because Krishna was not married." This was not given. Evidence of this is not only found in the Radha Rani temple in Barsana, but also in numerous other temples where Radha is worshipped independently. The public respect for Radha indicates the resilience of Indian life. The openness of our folk life, in its liberal nature, is certainly astonishing."⁴ The point to ponder is why the mention of Krishna's dalliance with 16,000 wives is ever mentioned. In fact, this situation was not Krishna's choice, but a testament to the sublimity of his personality, and a means of maintaining the social fabric. With the help of his wife Satyabhama, Krishna killed Narakasura and freed the 16,000 princesses abducted by him. When their relatives refused to accept them back into the family, Krishna accepted them with great devotion and gave them his clan and surname. This is not emotional love based on self-selection and equality. One could say this is the thing which was not mentioned in the entire story, because this thing was not serving the actual purpose to defame him so very unpleasant to them.'

Radha's character is not found in the stalwart epic Mahabharata. The Radha mentioned in the Mahabharata is Karna's foster mother, that is why Karna calls himself Radheya. We find Radha's name in different contexts in various Puranas. What is particularly noteworthy is that the Srimad Bhagavata, which contains the most detailed and melodious description of Krishna's love life in Vrajagiri, and the Purana that Gaudiya Vaishnavas have relied on primarily to establish the essence of Radha and Krishna's eternal love, does not explicitly mention Radha. In the tenth canto of the Bhagavata, in the context of the Raas Leela, we see that Krishna disappeared from the 'Raas Mandal' with one of his beloved Gopi. He engaged in a strange form of play with that beloved Gopi. While searching for Krishna, the Virhatura Gopis saw the footprint of another Vrajabala along with the footprint of Shri Krishna holding Dhruva, Vrajakush etc. in a forest of Vrindavan and addressed this very fortunate beloved of Krishna and said -

Anyaradhito nunam bhagwan
Haririshwarah

Yanno vihay govindah preeto
yamnayadrah. (Shrimad Bhagwat 10/20/24)

Through this (through this Ramani) surely Lord Hari has been worshipped, that is why Govind has left us and brought us to this unique place with pleasure" Radha has been worshiped within the word 'Anyaradhitha'. Here both types of text Anaya Aradhitha or Anaya Radhithah can be accepted. Both the texts have the same meaning. Sridhar Swami has not written anything in the commentary of this verse, but Sanatan Swami has written in his Vaishnavatoshani Tika⁵

"Anyav Aadharith
Aaraadhyavashakritah n tvsamabhih

Radhayati Aradhayatiti Radheti
Naamkaranam Cha Darshitam."

Vishwanath Chakraborty has said that "Noonam Harirayam Radhitah. Radha is obtained from it." It is noteworthy that in the five chapters of the Rasa Panchadhyayi, Kamadeva is the forbidden deity of the Rasa Mandala. While attempting to enter Krishna's Maharas Mandala, he faints and is carried away by his attendants. Those who consider Kama to be synonymous with sex should read these five chapters carefully; the

famous saying is: "Vidyavat Bhagavate Pariksha."

The seeds of Radhaism lie in Indian Shaktism; this same Shaktism, projected in various forms into Vaishnavism and Philosophy, has reached unprecedented culmination in different eras and various countries; Radhaism is a special expression of this culmination. In Kanupriya, Radha appears in person as a moment of supreme absorption, which gazed into our innermost being in such a way that it transformed our identity. Its core message can be easily reached only by focusing on Dharamveer Bharti's insistence in the preface to create and read the work. "All this external agitation is not what matters; what matters is what is experienced within us—a moment of extreme absorption that, on a level, proves more valuable than the entire process of external history, a moment that opens us like a shell—so that...past, present, and future are condensed and consolidated in that moment, and we are no longer ourselves."⁶ Therefore, Kanupriya's character and her perspective on the aftermath of war make this work truly remarkable. The poet's intense yearning to declare the futility of this world of mossy, tainted, and petty self-interested men, who prioritize war over peace, valorise impurity over love, reveals the radiance of Kanupriya's personality. Kanupriya is Krishna's supreme power, his inner emotional being, the culmination of the vast consciousness of the inner self; Therefore, there is no feeling of doubt or cross-examination here, rather there is a fluidity of emotional sentiments and the questions, curiosity and reactions arising from this take Kanupriya to a different level. Through Kanupriya, Bharti touches a new level of human sensitivity, one that heals the wounds of trauma-riddled humans by imparting the fluidity of empathy and compassion and another one is Kanupriya's unwavering love for Krishna empowers her, empowers her with wisdom, and enriches her with the experience of self-satisfaction while serving others. Love and self-respect are her greatest treasures, and she is always ready to protect them. She introspects, reasons, analyses the pain of separation and discusses her rights with Kanu. Her struggles have not only enhanced the brighter aspects of her personality; Kanu's fearless closeness and

profound compassion have also transformed her into a self-conscious woman, constantly grappling with dilemmas, speculations, imaginations, questions, and self-determinations. Kanupriya's monologue, ravings, conversations and introspection from time to time not only provide insight into interpreting emotions in a complex and multi-layered context but also alleviate the darkness and disorders within her and Kanu.

Krishna was no ordinary man. He was Radha's idol, exclusive lover, friend, companion, and relative. It was through him that Radha was able to find her own identity, to discover her inner meaning:

Is that why you have repeatedly said /
that you love me not for yourself, but for
me?

And were you giving proof of this /
when you were filling my own
individuality, my inner meaning in the parting of
my hair

and when you said, "Put the pallu on your
forehead!" were you also worrying /

that I should always keep this very
individuality, this inner meaning of mine, /

dignified, joyful and pure, like a
newlywed bride? ⁷

The warning to keep one's inner meaning joyful, pure, and dignified is also important here because a woman is able to find the true meaning of her existence only after extreme struggle. Rising above from the level of the body is the only path a woman can travel into her innermost being and recognize her worth, which is possible happen only through immense love and exclusive faith.

Bharti develops his perspective on womanhood by interacting with female characters from history and mythology. In his work, the movement of a woman's present, past, and future is constantly present. Therefore, Kanupriya's self-criticism and her analysis on Kanu's emotional state appears more authentic and convincing. When Krishna forgets Radha in the moments of history-making, Radha reminds him of what she was meant to him and what

place she deserves in the creation of human history with him:

I am your driving force / your support,
your Yogmaya in this entire ocean /

I alone am pervaded / mighty, limitless,
indomitable, fierce...

O my Creator / your creation is the only
substance of Your entire existence / Your
entire creation denotes only your will /
And the meaning of your entire will is

Only me! Only me!! Only me!!!⁸

These are the expressions of a woman, illuminated by the radiance of self-respect, which hold a mirror to male authority, social customs, and history: the foundation of the entire universe and the entire will of the supernatural authority is Kanupriya alone. She places her existence and her status above that of her beloved Kanu, who is her only intimate friend, protector, sibling, her goal, idol and destination. By presenting Radha's love experiences as a chronological sequence, Bharti has attempted to plumb the unfathomable depths of the female soul. By infusing the eternal love story of Radha and Krishna with her profound sensitivity, he has elevated Radha's character to a colossal synthesis of the diverse forms of many women. Radha is Krishna's inner strength, aware of her own powers. She is completely devoted to Krishna. For her, the moment of ultimate union with Krishna is so significant and immense that history pales in comparison. She cannot accept the way Krishna abandons her and the people of Gokul on the banks of the Yamuna to create that history, to change the course of contemporary political events. The Krishna who waited for Radha, playing his flute in her name, who found peace in moments of despair and deep darkness only by clinging to Kanupriya's bosom, leaves her distraught. The questions Radha, overcome with grief and anguish, asks Krishna, put humanity's history, society, culture, and politics on trial. This vigilant, self-aware woman cannot tolerate the sacrifice of her best self for Kanu's greatness. She cannot justify the importance of prioritizing war, ignoring the deep devotion of her unconditional love for seemingly meaningless concepts like big purpose, dharma, karma, justice, punishment, sin and virtue. She asks her beloved Kanu:

Well, my great Kanu, / suppose for a moment if I accept /

that all my deep moments of immersion were mere emotions, / delicate imaginations,

coloured, meaningless, attractive words /
Suppose / for a moment if I accept / that /

sin and virtue, righteousness and unrighteousness, justice and punishment /

your war of forgiveness is the truth /...

Suppose my deep moments of immersion were coloured,

meaningless, attractive words, / then what is the meaningfulness, Kanu?⁹

What is the truth of life? War or love? Both aspire to sacrifice your all. Then why not consider to love the truth, through which the ultimate welfare of the world is possible? Kanupriya is the embodiment of pulsating consciousness, and this is her desirable quality. She knows that realizing the vastness inherent in life is possible only through love. It is this greater human value that makes a person complete and meaningful. Only by completely surrendering to Kanu one can find his/her innermost self. She finds meaningfulness of life, and so, not only for Krishna but for whole humanity. She overcome with compassion and love so intense that all boundaries are broken and she discovers the secret of truth. She confesses her love to everyone with unflinching frankness:

Who are you to me? On this unsubstantial land, /

frightened by the barrage of questions asked from all sides

I have repeatedly / sought to entwine myself in a flowery embrace of words:

Friend-relative-adored / Child-divine-companion

And have sought to give myself new interpretations:

Friend-sadhika-bandhvi/Mother-bride-companion/

And again and again, in new forms, surging to your shores, /

And each time, like a vast ocean, you
have embraced me - /

absorbed me - / Yet remained
nonchalant-

The feeling that naturally arises in a woman's mind due to the barrage of questions is hesitation and the discomfort of answering. Kanupriya is also frightened by the questions. But for lovelorn Radha, love isn't something to be hidden; it's a natural emotion, the sublime culmination of spiritual emotion. The entire problem centres on Krishna's persistence in remaining unwavered. He likes the love and war in the same manner. Kanupriya can't understand his history-creating nature. However, she believes that while war may be the truth for Krishna, her own achievement is the moments of unconditioned love spent with him in engrossed devotion. These moments are true and meaningful because "they are the conceptual experience of a mind without dilemmas, and war is the product of dilemmas; phantasm of un-lived truth."¹¹ In fact, the mental frame of men and women is different. There is a difference in the thought processes of men and women about war and emotional relationships. Mahadevi wrote, "Women are not only physically and mentally unsuited for war, but war has also hindered their development. A soldier who has no hope for tomorrow, whose eyes are filled with the shadow of death, has only a woman in front of him. What will he do with his sacrifice, penance, devotion and love? The development of these qualities is possible only in companionship. ...This is why women in wartime often never became complete women. Draupadi, drenched in blood at Kurukshetra, appears before us neither as a glorious mother nor as a proud wife. Like the highest objects of wealth, she was distributed among the Pandava brothers, fleeing in fear of the enemy, and forced to survive as a mere instrument of war. In reality, the development of a woman's qualities lies in the peaceful environment of society, even if the times force us to reject this."

Dharamveer Bharti has mastered the art of raising serious questions about modern contexts and situations through the lens of myth. He is a seasoned artist. The questions he

addresses in "Andhayug" relates to the external consequences of war. However, Kanupriya is an analytical account of how war affects the psyche, how it devours good intentions and goodwill, and how it renders life's emotional purpose and beautiful experiences directionless:

This branch of the mango tree / was his
special favourite / on your non arrival /

He leaned on it all evening / and
repeatedly hailed / Your name on his flute - /

Today this mango branch / Will be cut
forever / Because this low branch /

Is caught in the sky-high flags of the
aerodynamic chariots / Of Krishna's warlords. ¹³

Generally, there are some specific stages of Radha-Krishna's love in Indian folklore. Radha met Krishna on her way to the ghat, carrying a pitcher in her arm, or near that pond. Or perhaps she fell in love with Krishna while grazing the cows, listening to his flute. Or perhaps she went to the market with milk and curd, and met Krishna on the way. For Indian women, as soon as they enter adolescence, or even in other circumstances, "ghar haite aangana Videsh" (going to one's own courtyard becomes going abroad). In Radha's love story, we only find fame of the conveniences of love in this kind of social environment of rural life. In such a situation, war cannot be imagined without cutting down the mango and kadamba trees that are the shelter for these passionate leila. The fundamental difference in the basic structure and experience of war and peace lies in their inherent differences and different perspectives on life and the world. Mahadevi writes in "Shrinkhla ki Kadiyan", "Women's mental development is different from that of men, but their nature is festinant gentler, and emotions like love and hate are more intense. Her personality develop according to these characteristics, continues to fulfil those needs of society that cannot be fulfilled by the male nature. The difference between these two natures is as great as that between lightning and a downpour. One can generate power, great tasks can be accomplished, but thirst cannot be quenched. The other provides peace, but the creation of brute strength is impossible with it."¹⁴

A woman has always found her meaning in assimilating her being and surrendering herself to a man's entity. Perhaps this sentiment is existed due to some inherent compulsion. She has always prioritized home, children and a peaceful life over other pursuit. Therefore, war is not a thrill or an extension of her power for her, as it is for a man. Therefore, the one whom Bharti presents as the speaker and seer of the consequences of war and its salvation is a woman. Radha is a queen, Krishna's beloved, whose mere glance changes the whole course of creation; even she cannot understand the outcome of this entire war, even under the spell of grand words, she is unable to justify this destruction in any way. Even today, she finds immense peace under the mango tree where Krishna used to wait impatiently for her arrival:

In that trance, / hiding my face in your bosom / shyly / whatever I said /

I don't know if it had any meaning or not:
.... / Now I don't remember, but I do know
this much that under this mango branch
/ where you stood and called me

even now I find immense peace after coming here.¹⁵

"In reality, she cannot see war from a man's perspective. Partly due to his nature and partly due to his involvement in external conflicts, a man could not become as attached to his home as a woman. For him, the destruction of his home is the loss of a source of happiness, but for a woman, it is the destruction of her life... War is a catastrophe for the home, which is why she has remained apart from it."¹⁶ And the most serious reflection on this genetic nature of a woman is that her personality, no matter where she is in the world, is shaped by social and cultural conditioning. The feeling of completely 'giving herself up,' or immersing herself like a downtrodden vine, is the mentality that flow in her blood through her veins. But what is the result of this self-sacrifice? Her beloved shatters her bright dreams, leaving her existence unrecognized and moving on in pursuit of a greater life purpose. When she dispassionately examines her situation and identity, the truth that comes to her is this:

From the valley below / to the peaks above / Whoever was destined to go has gone -

Alas, step on me / from my arms / history has taken you! / Listen Kanu, listen / was I a bridge for you/in the unbridgeable gap/between the playground and the battlefield¹⁷

Men alone want to be the creator and consumer of history so that he can shape the future in his favour as per his wishes. Kanu is not an ordinary man, he is the representative of masculine gender, so Kanupriya's pain and her heart-wrenching question are not limited to him but become a question for the entire male entity. She asks Kanu why the history-maker Krishna has forgotten the one who was her innermost sharer, the companion of her life's deepest moments. Did she have no role in his creation? How can any history be credible without her? The truth is that "penance without women is the world's gravest mistake. These vast religious ceremonies, military organizations, and state administrations will all vanish like foam and bubbles, because women do not contribute to them. All this pomp and show will only create unrest in the world."¹⁸ Despite this, patriarchal ideology has always been hatching a conspiracy against women: to erase women from the historical landscape so that no date can witness to their significant contributions. Anamika has captured this truth very accurately:

Today I collided with history / But it did not even recognize me

It had forgotten me completely / It had forgotten that I was in its class.¹⁹

Kanupriya, besides being the empress of nature, is also self-respecting entity, hence aware of her existence and so a supporter of freedom. Unconditional love and selfless selfgiving attitude are the foundation and the lifeblood of her life and existence. Therefore, she repeatedly questions, attempts to do experiments to understand her true identity, wanders, remains restless, and searches for the true meaning of being a woman. Ultimately, the truth that brings her peace and soothes the burning heart is the unconditional surrender of herself.

Kanupriya possesses the remarkable ability to force a deeply patriarchal society into deep discussion through her questions. Her vociferous courage for her love makes her surprisingly modern. This woman is unique because she defends her womanhood, the dignity of her existence, and even questions her God (her lover) about impending war. The modernity and ideological independence of Indian women are distinct from western norms. They may consider their success in being dominant, but its true significance lies in squeezing themselves like a downtrodden grape for the welfare of her 'man'. They come to bestow joy. This joy is not about marginalizing oneself, but rather, it is akin to the joy and satisfaction we find when we shower compassion on someone and transform the inner chaos into peace. Therefore, Kanupriya also embraces the battle-weary, dejected, and disheartened Krishna and caresses him like a child. Indeed, "man's strength and weakness must not have been hidden from the woman who defeated man's barbarity and awakened his dormant spirit. The foundations of these sacred homes are laid on woman's wisdom, not man's power. Due to her innate wisdom, woman did not even allow herself to come into conflict with man. If she had, the story of mankind would have been different."²⁰ Here the consequences of war's destructive play are seen from Kanupriya's perspective. Those who participated in the war, even Draupadi, had no time for introspection or worry about the dire consequences. But common citizens who did not participate in the war, women, in particular, suffer its long-term consequences. "In those countries where people have considered animosity and enmity a matter of supreme pride for men, and who, with this thought, constantly fight wars and, by destroying the population, in a way, increase the proportion of women in their country, the value of women has declined."²¹ It is true that women are killed in every way due to war. But, by the time the anger of war-crazed men is assuaged, civilization has seen the paradigm shift, an entire generation has been massacred, history has been drenched in blood. The men who escaped the battle are left with nothing but anguish and remorse, and they yearn to return to the same cool shade they had turned away from. The desire to expand and their selfhood had drawn them to the battlefield, and

now the same woman, with outstretched arms, waits to embrace that exhausted, bewildered, and confused man like a fawn:

You called me, didn't you? / I have come,
Kanu, /

And I am waiting for you at the most
difficult turn of this endless path of
rebirths /

So that, this time, while making history /
You are not left alone!²²

Even after turning the tide of history and securing victory in his favour, Krishna's accomplishments left him empty within. Fame, victory and expansion could not give him the romance and inner joy that he found when he naturally and completely surrendered himself to Radha. She considers her foolishness and naiveté to be her priceless treasure because each time these attributes of her compel the steadfast, detached, ascetic, and unwavering Krishna to hold her in his arms and render her unconscious:

At every foolishness of mine, sometimes
with sadness,

sometimes with a silent resolve,
sometimes with a smile,

Why should I give up the comfort that you
lovingly hold

me in your arms and render me
unconscious?

I will do it again and again, I will commit
foolishness,

I am your talkative, stubborn, and
foolish friend too!²³

Kanupriya doesn't want to be a philosopher; she finds the meaning of her existence only in becoming entwined in Kanu's clasp and falling into unconsciousness. Seeing the ethereal and gigantic form of that historical figure, Kanu, a cloud of doubt descends upon Kanupriya. A vortex of confusion coils around her mind. In a state of confusion, she asks:

The child whom I brought home hidden
in my lap that day during the rains,

how great, how great, how great has he become today.

But I can't think of anything else/ Just -
/ Where you showered me with boundless love/

I sit there, picking up pebbles, leaves, straws, and fragments/

In your rise to greatness/ Has something of mine shattered and shattered, Kanu? ²⁴

Women don't run away from sacrifice; they simply crave acceptance and appreciation from their loved ones, and hear a few words of love and reassurance. Kanupriya holds the thread of this creation's entire sequence of events. Bharti, while accommodating the uninhibited love that has been integral part of Radha's personality for ages, was recreating her in a revolutionary way in sight of contemporary society and culture. The freedom he granted her which is based on her potential consciousness, could have become a thorn in the eyes of any male-dominated society because, at that time, and more or less even today, women were and still are only responsible for upholding the decorum of the inner world, rather than being recorded in the dates and events of history. Intolerance to injustice is the greatest proof of a human being's existence. However, the principle of "destruction for the sake of destruction" is the eradication of the emotional sensitivity and creative desire of every human being.

But I can't think of anything else/ Just -
/ Where you showered me with boundless love/

I sit there, picking up pebbles, leaves, straws, and fragments/

In your rise to greatness/ Has something of mine shattered and shattered, Kanu? ²⁵

Kanupriya is a work that follows "Andha Yug." The tone and popularity of "Andha Yug" makes Kanupriya's creation open up many questions about modern sensibility. In "Andha Yug," he reflected on the external manifestations of the formidable forces and dynamics of history through Gandhari, Yuyutsu, and Ashwatthama. However, Kanupriya transforms that emotional turmoil into a spiritual saga, facilitating the journey to the inner self. By placing the philosopher and historian Kanu in the dock of time and history, she raises profound and

burning questions. She considers the discovery of those rare moments in life's greatest achievement to be the moment when past, present, and future merge, stripping us of our physical and geographical identities. The aura of intellectual excellence, along with the enchanting essence of melody, is present at every step of this work:

Like power, like light, like movement, I, spread out,

Suddenly I have shrunk, bound within limits.

But when I woke up, I realized, alas, what limits!

I am what is called the bride of the world, the bride of time—

On the boundless paths of time and direction—/ Since eternity, in infinite directions,

I have been walking with you, and I will continue to walk...²⁶

Kanupriya symbolizes the ceaseless journey from the external to the internal. The external form of war-induced destruction that Bharti depicted in *Andhayug* is reflected in Kanupriya, reflecting the inner struggle and the journey of the inner river. The creation concludes with the optimistic view that Krishna, who went to the battlefield, will prove the futility of war and, exhausted will return to the same playground where Radha has been anxiously awaiting him for ages. The whole world is suffering from political, social, and cultural disintegration. In this valueless, disintegrating state, Kanupriya's core message can make a valuable contribution. Men have always justified war by linking their sense of ownership and rights with caste, individuality, nation, religion, justice, freedom, and security. Kanupriya subtly rebels against this very sense of dominance and hunger for expansion. The meaning of individual life lies in becoming self-conscious by merging with social life. There is no contradiction between love and progress. Nothing, no one, is more valuable than life:

In this world, nothing is greater than a human life.

Neither God, nor knowledge, nor choice.

The conscience that stands leaning on
corpses is blind.

The government that runs on the barrel
of a gun is the business of murderers.

Remember, the murder of a child, the
death of a woman,

The bullet-ripped body of a man is the
downfall of an entire nation,
not of any government.²⁷

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